

A Request for Results Story



July 18, 2001

The "Context"

New research in
brain
development



Proposition 10

Greater awareness of
how the
brain develops

County
Commissions

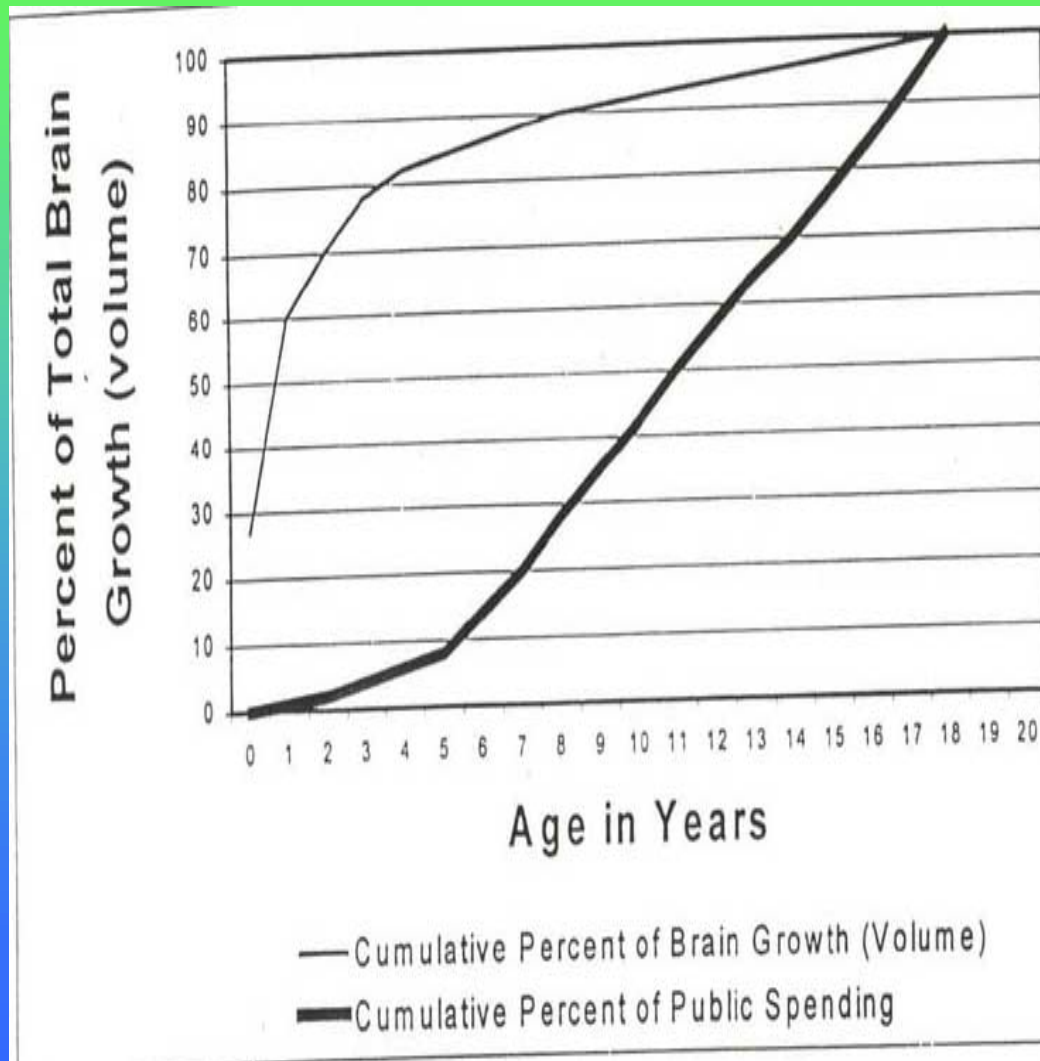
Food for Thought
Video-Health Partners

It's Remarkably Simple ...

The latest research shows that starting from birth, we can dramatically improve children's ability to learn by meeting these ten essential needs

- **Interaction**
- **Touch**
- **Stable Relationships**
- **Safe, Healthy Environments**
- **Self-Esteem**
- **Quality Care**
- **Play**
- **Communication**
- **Music**
- **Reading**

Yet Complex... Look at brain growth Vs. public spending for children



- While the brain grows most rapidly during the early years of life, public spending for children is focused on the years after the majority of brain growth has occurred.

More Context

The issues facing children and families are complex

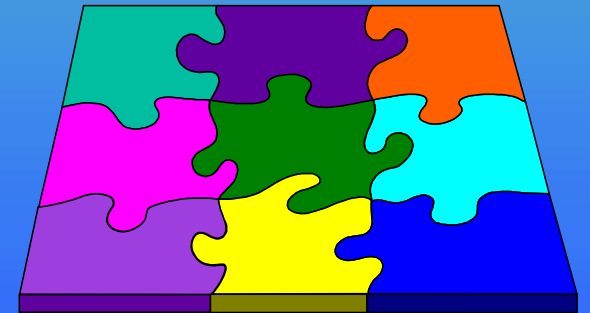
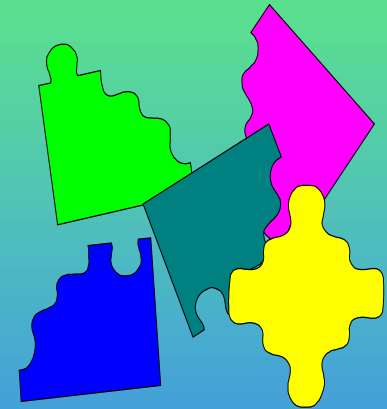
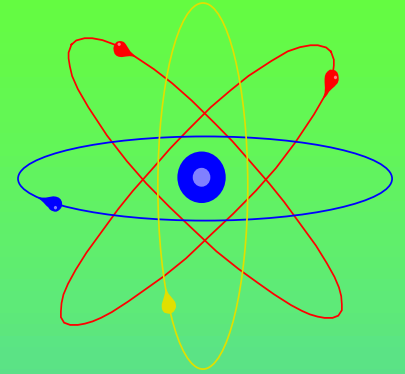
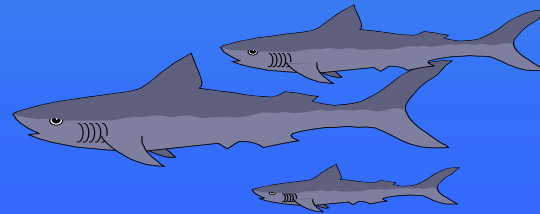
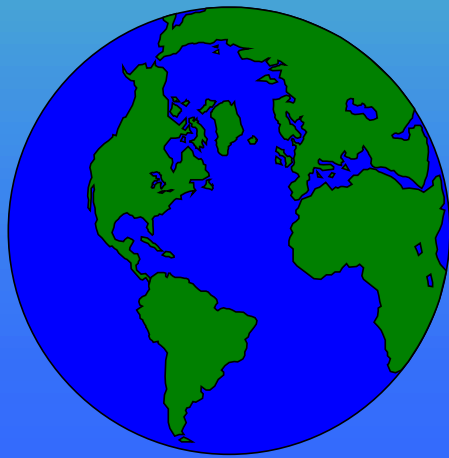
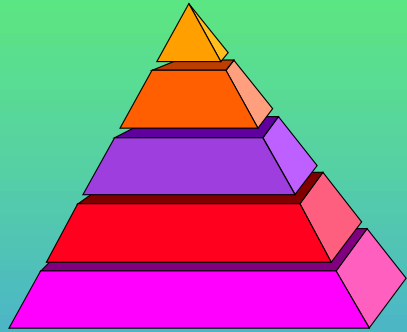
Counties are invited to form local commissions and must develop a “strategic plan” that is “integrated.”

But a plan is only as good as the thinking that goes into it. This presents an opportunity to think “out of the box” and shift from the linear thinking and metaphors that got us into this mess, and adopt another way of thinking that recognizes the biological “complex adaptive self-organizing systems” that live all around us. “The new science of chaos and complexity theory gives us new rules:”

“Physical metaphors lead to complex rules and procedures that result in simple and simplistic behaviors.”

“Biological metaphors lead to simple rules that result in complex behaviors.” - David Thornburg

Complex Adaptive Systems



To keep up you need the right answers.



To get ahead you need the right questions.

John Browning and Spencer Reiss

Community Conversations

We all see parts of the picture filtered through our beliefs and experiences. It is through conversation that we might see the whole.

The Institute for Cultural Affairs "Focused Conversation" method takes us to deeper levels of understanding:

Objective Level - The perceived facts and external reality.

Reflective Level - To call forth an inner response, emotions, feelings, and associations.

Interpretive Level - The meaning, values, significance, and implications.

Decisional Level - Resolution, what does this beckon us to do?

County
Commission



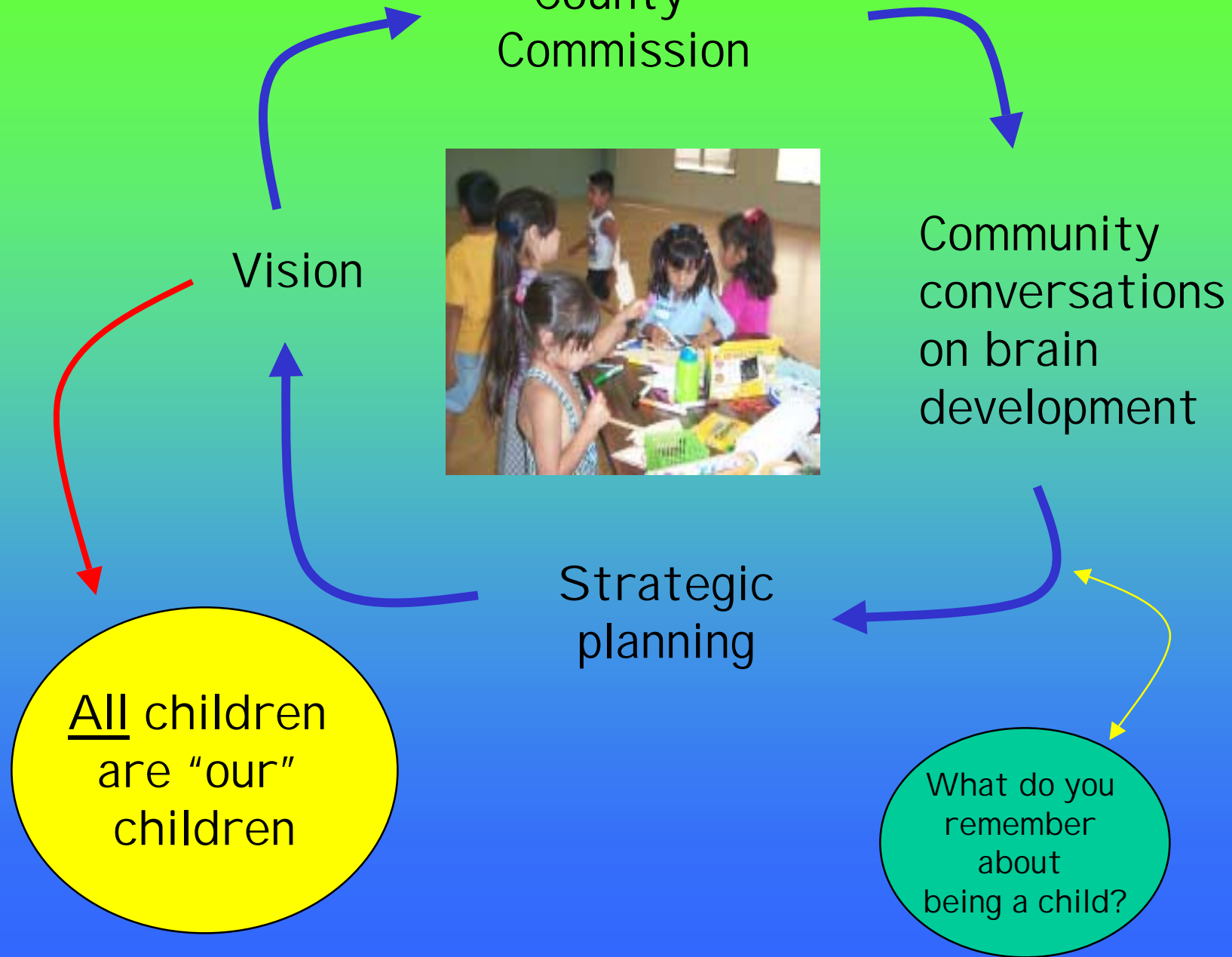
Vision

Community
conversations
on brain
development

Strategic
planning

All children
are "our"
children

What do you
remember
about
being a child?





Vision is often born in the midst of destruction It can be messy.

Our Vision

" The Placer Children and Families Commission believes all children are our children; therefore we shall create an environment that supports our children and their families in reaching their full potential."



Opening Space for Spirit



Simple Rules

Who ever comes are the right people

Whatever happens is the only thing that could have

Whenever it starts is the right time

When it's over it's over

The Law of Two Feet

"All children are our children"



Drafting an integrated plan



Rolling the plan out in community response meetings held in "Open Space"

"How does this plan become something we would all want to be part of?"

Rewriting the plan to stay in sync

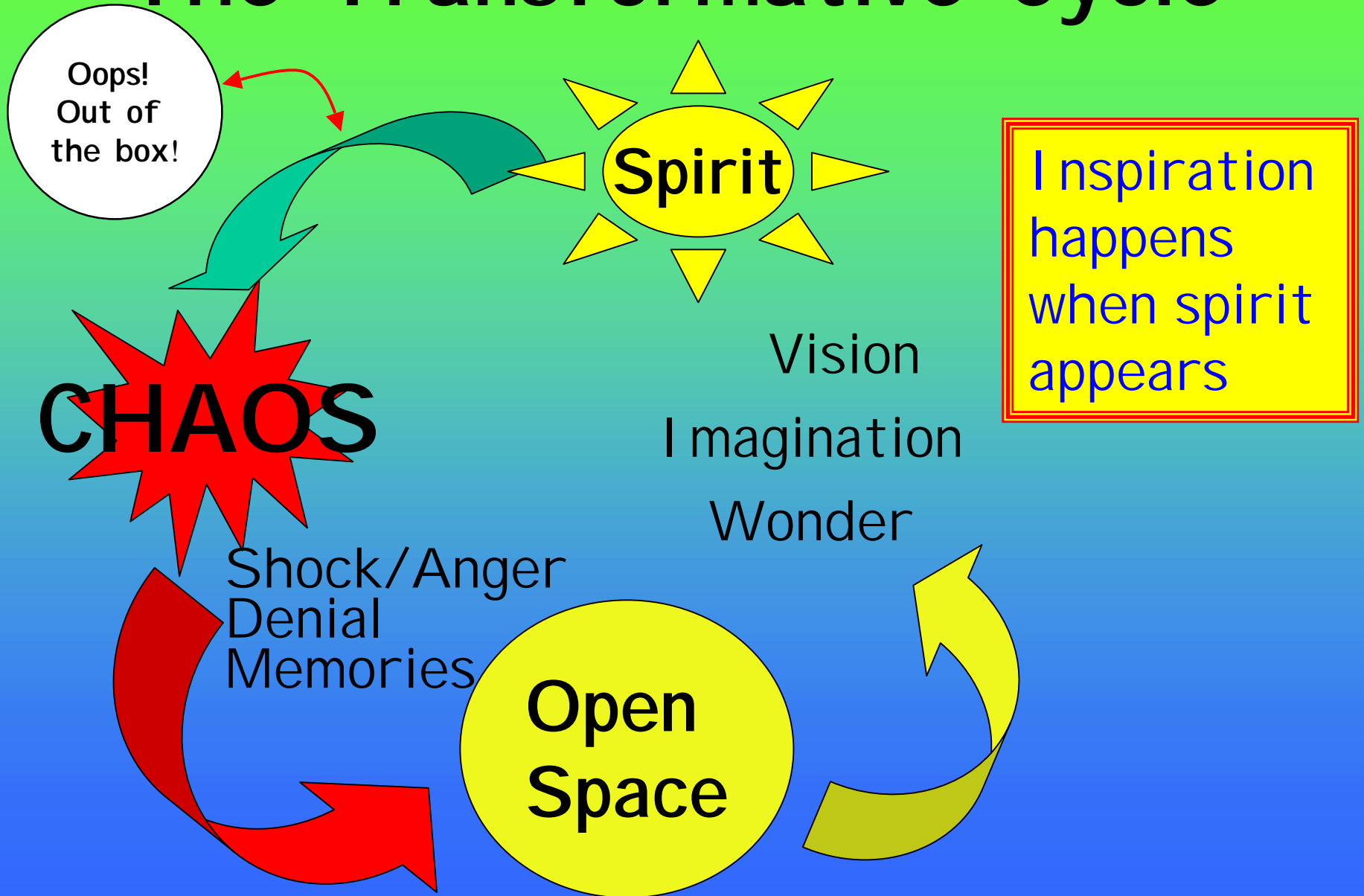
**Embracing
Chaos**

The Dance of Chaos

- Learning
- Self-Organization
- Transformation



The Transformative Cycle



"When people think about Chaos they usually equate it with randomness. This is a mistake. While it is true that the future state of a complex system (such as the weather) may not be predictable, neither is it random. "

David Thornburg

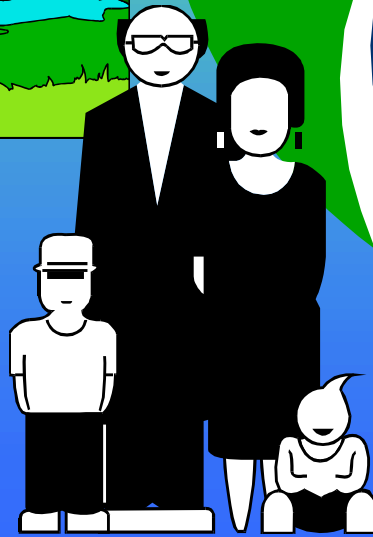
Science and experience tells us that chaos is not random but really "chaordic." It is moving toward order following a "Strange Attractor."

The Strange Attractor in groups is **Vision, Passion and/or Meaning.**

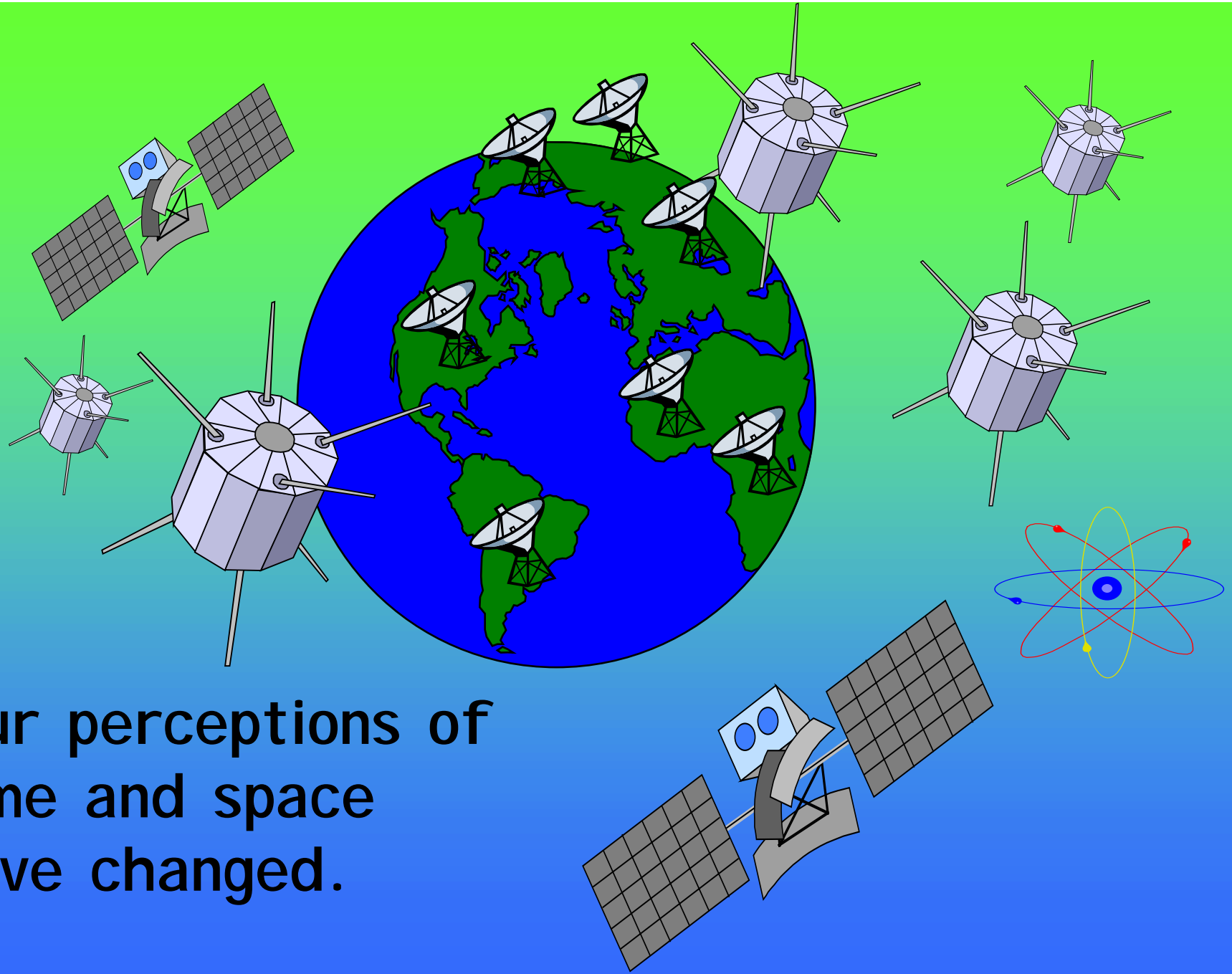
But what if we lose "control?"



Someday, things
will get back to
normal . . .



NOT!!!



Our perceptions of
time and space
have changed.

Plan reviewed
in Open Space

Community & CFC review
applications

Applications
received

The concept for a "Request
for Results" emerges.

Applicant workshops held in
Open Space - an "Invitation to
Partner"

"Partner
network"
created

"What will we do collaboratively to improve the lives
of children 0-5 and their families in Placer County?"





It's Chaos then
it's Order



The R4R Format

- What is the problem and/or opportunity you are addressing?
- What will existing conditions become like if your application is funded?
- What will you do with Prop.10 funds to achieve your proposed outcomes?
- What qualitative and/or quantitative information will you collect to describe the extent to which your program achieves the proposed outcomes?
- How much will the effort cost, and what other funds will be used in addition to Prop. 10?
- What is your organization's history or experience with this type of project?
- Describe how you will collaborate or interact with other organizations to achieve your anticipated results?

Simple Rules

Outcomes (results)

What will the people you serve do after you have finished serving them?

What conditions will exist in your community after your efforts are completed?

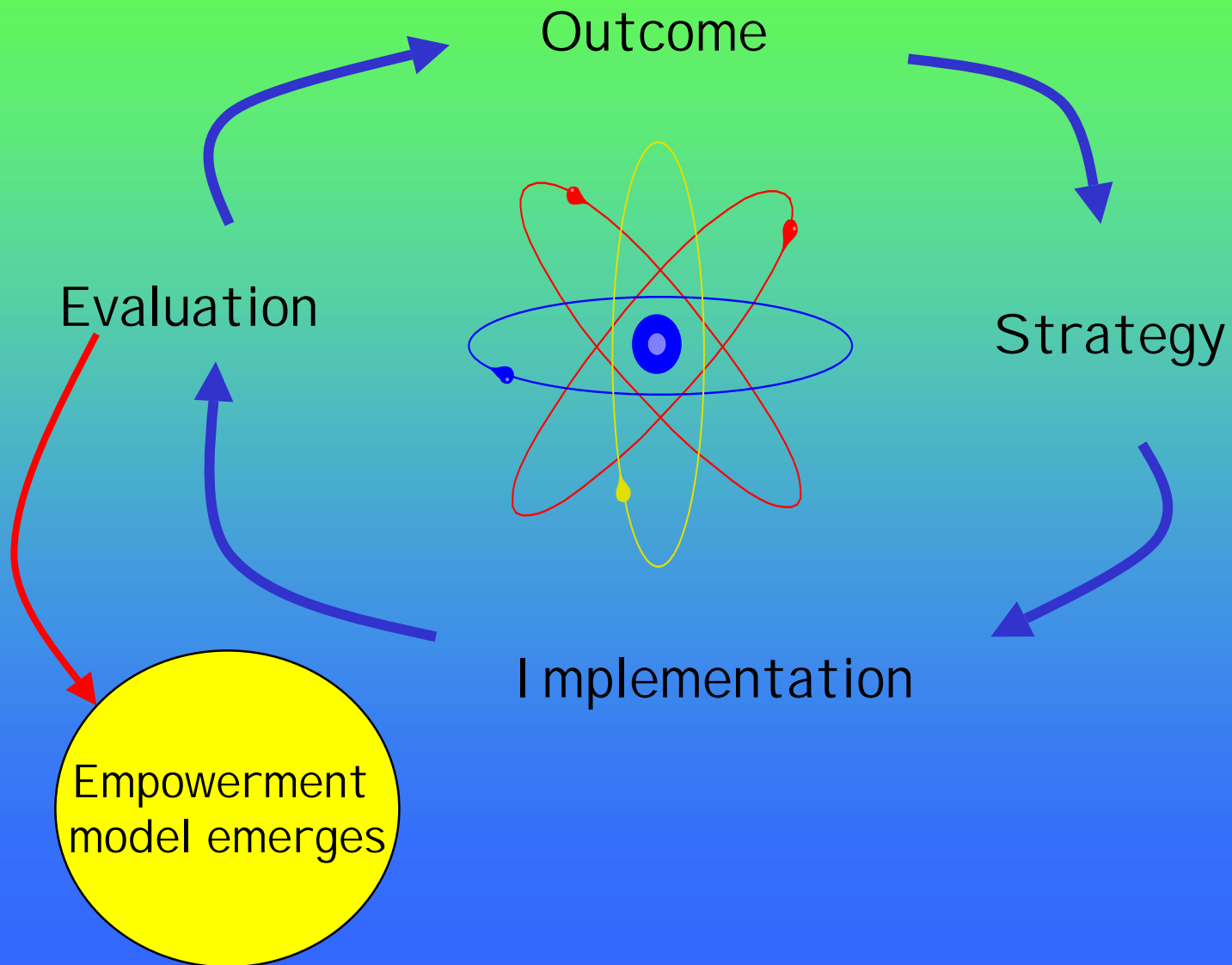
Strategies (processes)

What will you do to get the people you serve to do what you want them to do?

What will you do to create the conditions you want for your community?

David Gray

Outcome Model



Empowerment Evaluation

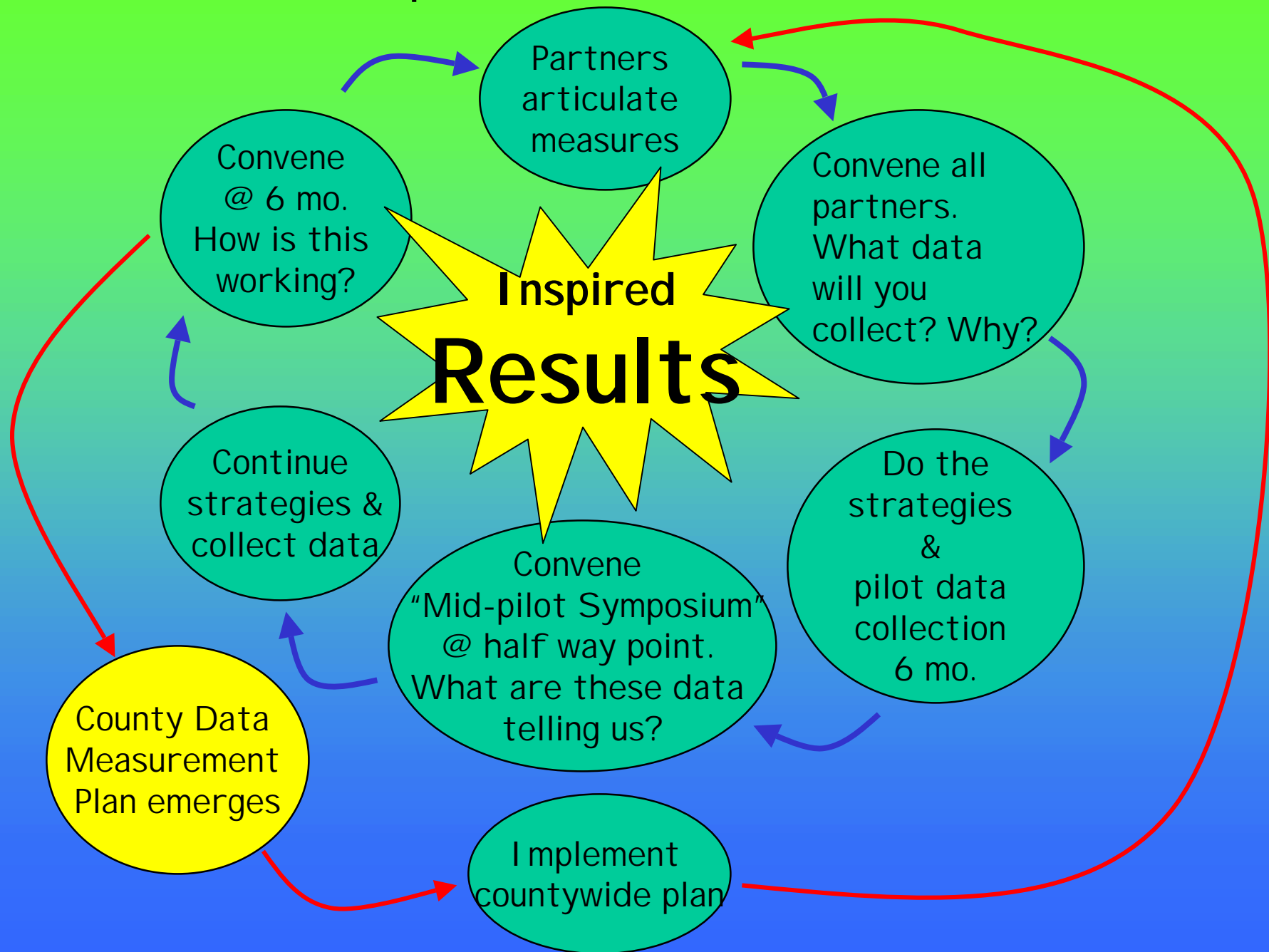
People sensing that they are at the center of things, rather than at the periphery.

Everyone feels that they can make a difference to the success of the endeavor.

Empowerment individuals feel that what they do has meaning and significance

“Empowerment evaluation” is a participatory process that leads to learning among all participants which, when shared, leads to corrective actions and program improvements. Learning is building capacity to do what we could not do before.

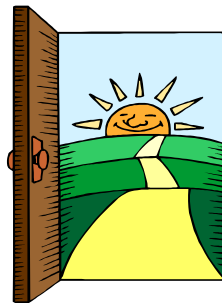
Empowerment Evaluation Model



Next Step

A complex adaptive self-organizing collaborative characterized by cooperation, creativity, and mutual respect.

Keeping the Space Open



No child should go without care and or enrichment just so one agency can get money while another does not. No one agency can do this alone.

The Context For Our Theme

Healthy family functioning,
child development,
school readiness,
systems improvement
both formal and informal.

The desire, and the opportunity to have a participatory evaluation where:

- everyone feels they can make a difference.
- learning is shared among all participants
- learning is used to make funding, policy and service delivery decisions.

What will we show
our community
to demonstrate the
impact of our programs,
and how will we capture this
evidence in a meaningful way?

The need to show results to:

- our community
- our clients
- customers
- state and local CFC
- our organization.

References

- Brainstorms & Lightening Bolts - Thinking Skills for the 21st Century - David Thornburg
- The Fifth Discipline Field Book - Peter Senge, et al
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- Expanding Our Now - The Story of Open Space Technology- Harrison Owen
- The Power of Spirit - How Organizations Transform - Harrison Owen
- Leadership and the New Science - Margaret Wheatley
- The Case for Shifting to Results Based Accountability - Lizbeth Schorr
- The Art of the Focused Conversation - Institute for Cultural Affairs - Canada
- Food for Thought Video- Health Partners
- Placer County Children and Families Commission & Community - Request for Results
- OST List Serve - Slides on Open Space